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# Community Policing: A Practical Guide for Police Officials

**By Lee P. Brown**

Like many other social institutions, American police departments are responding to rapid social change and emerging problems by rethinking their basic strategies. In response to problems such as crime, drugs, fear, and urban decay, the police have begun experimenting with new approaches to their tasks.

Among the most prominent new approaches is the concept of community policing. Viewed from one perspective, it is not a new concept; the principles can be traced back to some of policing's oldest traditions. More recently, some of the important principles of community policing have been reflected in particular programs initiated in a variety of places within police departments.

What is new is the idea that community policing is not a particular program within a department, but instead should become the dominant philosophy throughout the department. Exactly what it means for community policing to become a department-wide philosophy and how a police executive can shift an organization from a more traditional philosophy to a community-policing philosophy has been unclear.

Our experience in Houston is beginning to clarify these issues. We are developing a clear, concrete picture of what it means to operate a police department committed to a philosophy of community policing. We have also learned how to manage the process of evolution towards a philosophy of community policing. And we are learning how the basic administrative and managerial systems of the department

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This is one in a series of reports originally developed with some of the leading figures in American policing during their periodic meetings at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. The reports are published so that Americans interested in the improvement and the future of policing can share in the information and perspectives that were part of extensive debates at the School's Executive Session on Policing.

The police chiefs, mayors, scholars, and others invited to the meetings have focused on the use and promise of such strategies as community-based and problem-oriented policing. The testing and adoption of these strategies by some police agencies signal important changes in the way American policing now does business. What these changes mean for the welfare of citizens and the fulfillment of the police mission in the next decades has been at the heart of the Kennedy School meetings and this series of papers.

We hope that through these publications police officials and other policymakers who affect the course of policing will debate and challenge their beliefs just as those of us in the Executive Session have done.

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must be changed to accommodate and encourage community policing. The purpose of this paper is to make this experience available to the field, and to give concrete, operational content to what are otherwise mere abstractions and possibilities.

## The origins of community policing

Houston's interest in community policing as an overall philosophy of policing did not spring full-blown from any particular person's mind. Instead, it has emerged from the evolution of police thought. That police leaders are challenging the assumptions they have held for several decades should not be construed as an attempt to debunk all that has worked well for many years. Rather the rethinking should be seen as a sign of police leaders' commitment to ensuring that the strategies they adopt will be viable not only now but in the future as well. Only by refining what works well and scrapping or reshaping what no longer meets the community's needs can police departments face up to the problems and deliver the services that citizens deserve and should expect.

***"... police leaders are challenging the assumptions they have held for several decades ..."***

The evolution to community policing is not complete. What is commonly called traditional policing remains this country's dominant policing style. From its introduction in the 1930's through the 1970's, when it reached its peak of popularity, traditional policing has developed a number of identifying characteristics, such as the following:

- The police are *reactive* to incidents. The organization is driven by calls for police service.
- *Information* from and about the community is limited. Planning efforts focus on internally generated police data.
- *Planning* is narrow in its focus and centers on internal operations such as policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.
- *Recruitment* focuses on the spirit of adventure rather than the spirit of service.
- *Patrol officers* are restrained in their role. They are not encouraged or expected to be creative in addressing problems and are not rewarded for undertaking innovative approaches.
- *Training* is geared toward the law enforcement role of the police even though officers spend only 15 to 20 percent of their time on such activities.
- *Management* uses an authoritative style and adheres to the military model of command and control.
- *Supervision* is control-oriented as it reflects and reinforces the organization's management style.
- *Rewards* are associated with participating in daring events rather than conducting service activities.
- *Performance evaluations* are based not on outcomes but on activities. The number of arrests made and the number of citations issued are of paramount importance.
- *Agency effectiveness* is based on data—particularly crime and clearance rates—from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports.
- *Police departments* operate as entities unto themselves, with few collaborative links to the community.

***"Traditional policing gave citizens a false sense of security ... Fortunately for the police profession, the 1970's fostered a full-scale attempt to analyze a host of policing issues."***

For 40 years, traditional policing ostensibly served the public well, primarily because it was seen as a marked improvement over the policing style it had replaced—one that was characterized by negative political control and widespread corruption. Traditional policing gave citizens a false sense of security about police officers' ability to ensure the safety of the community. That the policing style might not be as effective as it seemed came into sharp focus by the middle 1960's and early 1970's when riots and protests exploded with rampant regularity across America. As citizens and police officials alike watched the scenario unfold, probing

questions were raised about the apparent inability of the police to prevent—or at least control—such outbreaks.

By the time the 1960's arrived, it was increasingly clear that both elected officials and the public knew little about the police and their operations. The situation called for decisive action and led to the formation of a number of commissions to examine the events surrounding the riots and to offer recommendations for improving police operations. The commissions' discussions included topics ranging from violence in cities and on college campuses to criminal justice standards and goals.

The attempts to remedy what was seen as an intolerable situation, however, were not confined to meeting-room discussions. Massive amounts of money for police operations and research were funneled through the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration as part of the Government's response to the concern.

Fortunately for the police profession, the 1970's fostered a full-scale attempt to analyze a host of policing issues. The extensive research effort, which continued into the 1980's, produced findings that prompted many thoughtful police professionals to rethink how best to use police resources. Some of the more significant findings are described below:[1]

- *Increasing the number of police officers* does not necessarily reduce the incidence of crime nor increase the proportion of crimes that are solved. The relationship that does exist is between crime and adverse social conditions, such as poverty, illiteracy, illegal drugs, unemployment, population density, and social heterogeneity.

- *Random patrol* produces inconsistent results. It does not necessarily reduce crime nor enhance an officer's chances of apprehending a criminal suspect. It also does not bring the police closer to the public or reduce citizens' fear of crime.

The use of foot patrols (a popular tactic of community policing), on the other hand, has been shown to reduce the fear of crime though not necessarily the actual number of crimes that are committed.

- The assignment of *one officer per patrol car* is just as effective and just as safe as the assignment of two officers per car. The number of crimes committed does not rise, and the number of criminals apprehended does not fall when officers patrol solo. Nor do officers face a greater risk of injury or death when they travel alone.

- *Saturation patrol* reduces crime by temporarily suppressing the illegal activities or displacing them to other areas.

- Seldom do patrol officers encounter a *serious crime in progress.*

- *Rapid response* is not as important as previously believed because there generally is an extended delay before citizens call the police. A rapid police response is important only in the small percentage of cases where a life is being threatened or apprehension of the suspect is possible. Citizens are satisfied instead with a *predetermined response time* upon which they can depend. For incidents that are minor and do not require an officer's presence at the scene, citizens are satisfied with *alternative* methods, such as having the incident report taken over the telephone.

- *Criminal investigations* are not as successful as previously believed. Because crimes are more likely to be resolved if the suspect is apprehended immediately or a witness can supply the person's name, address, or license-plate number or recognizes him in a photograph, successful investigations occur when the suspect is known and when corroborating evidence can be obtained for arrest and prosecution. A key source of information about crimes and criminal suspects is the public.

Additional proof—beyond the reams of data generated by researchers—that time-honored policing strategies were ineffective came in the form of a widespread fear of crime among citizens, record-high crime rates, and record-high prison populations despite the availability of more officers and more funds for law enforcement efforts. As a result, progressive police administrators soon began to question the efficacy of traditional policing strategies. Their review of the situation heralded the beginning of an incremental transition to community-oriented programs and thus the beginning of Phase I of community policing.

## Two phases in community policing: from programs to style

The growing awareness of the limitations of the traditional model of policing stimulated police departments across America to experiment with new approaches to reducing crime, stilling fears, improving police community relations, and restoring community confidence in the police. For the most part, these experiments were conceived and executed as discrete programs within traditional departments. That is, the

> ***". . . begun with fanfare, they produced important results, and then they faded . . ."***

programs were typically initiated as a response to a particular problem, involved only a small fraction of the organization, were time-limited, were explicitly identified as experiments, and were subject to particularly close scrutiny by researchers. Often the programs had their own champions and command structures within the departments.

Examples of these programs include the foot patrol experiments in Newark, New Jersey, and Flint, Michigan; the problem-solving project in Newport News, Virginia; the fear reduction programs in Houston, Texas, and Newark; the Community Patrol Officer Program in New York City; the Directed Area Responsibility Team experiment in Houston; the community policing experiment in Santa Ana, California; the Basic Car Plan and Senior Lead-Officer programs in Los Angeles; and the Citizen-Oriented Police Enforcement program in Baltimore County, Maryland. Often these programs had a curious fate. They were begun with fanfare, they produced important results, and then they faded within the departments that had initiated them. These programs, and their fates, constituted Phase I of the field's experience with community policing. They taught two important lessons.

First, the programs taken together pointed toward some new frontiers for policing. They taught the field that if it viewed incidents as emerging from problems, then new avenues for contributing to the solutions of the underlying problems opened up. They taught the field that fear was an important problem in its own right, and there were things that police departments could do to reduce fear quite apart from reducing actual criminal victimization. They taught the field that the community could be an important partner in dealing with the problems of crime, fear, and drugs and that to build that partnership with the community, the police had to find more effective ways of interacting with the community and responding to their needs. These basic ideas provided the intellectual foundations for the emerging new conceptions of community policing.

Second, the ultimate demise of many of the programs showed the difficulty of trying to operate programs that embodied some of the important principles of community policing in the context of organizations whose administrative systems and managerial styles were designed for more traditional models of policing. It seemed clear that if the field as a whole or any police department within the field were to succeed in implementing community policing, it would have to be as an overall philosophy of the department.

## The development of community policing in Houston

Houston took these lessons to heart. We were tempted by the potential of community policing, but worried about the tendency of individual programs to collapse after they had been operating for a while. It was also hard to see how one could move from a department committed to traditional policing to a department that had adopted community policing as a philosophy. Our solution to these problems was to follow the experience of the field and to understand that the implementation of community policing in Houston would also have to have two phases.

Phase I of community policing is the implementation of programs designed to provide the public with meaningful ways to participate in policing efforts. The initial phase does *not* require a complete change in the organization's operating style. Phase II, on the other hand, *does* require the organization to make such a change.

Because Phase I involves only the implementation of individual programs, the systems that support the organization's policing style—such as recruitment, training, performance evaluation, rewards, and discipline—do not change. In other words, the individual *programs* are separate entities that do not involve the entire department or affect the entire community.

> ***"Phase II, however, involves more sweeping and more comprehensive changes."***

Phase II, however, involves more sweeping and more comprehensive changes. It is not merely programs that are being implemented—it is the department's *style* that is being revamped. Unlike individual programs, style affects the entire department and the entire community.

The Houston Police Department evolved from Phase I to Phase II over a 5-year period starting in 1982. The department operated under a set of values that emphasized problem solving and collaboration with the community. It also redesigned its patrol beats to reflect natural neighborhood boundaries. Most important, though, were its experiments with a variety of community-oriented programs that resulted in greater community involvement with the department. At the end of the 5-year evolutionary period, the department made an organizational commitment to adopt community

policing as its dominant operating style. The department's experiences during Phase I were invaluable and made the transition to Phase II much easier, for the individual programs enabled the department to accomplish the following:[2]

- Break down barriers to change.
- Educate its leaders and rank-and-file members on the merits of community policing.
- Reassure the rank-and-file that the community policing concepts being adopted had not been imported from outside the department but instead were an outgrowth of programs already in place.
- Address problems on a small scale before making the full transition to community policing.
- Reduce the likelihood that members of the department would reject the concepts of community policing as "foreign" or not appropriate for the department and the community.
- Demonstrate to the public and elected officials the benefits of community policing.
- Provide a training ground for community policing concepts and strategies.
- Create advocates among those persons who would become community-policing trainers.
- Demonstrate its willingness to experiment with new ideas.

Based on Houston's experience, it is clear that organizations that have not operated Phase I community policing programs will have to begin Phase II with a clear understanding of what community policing is and how it differs from traditional policing.

Although it is an operating style, community policing also is a *philosophy* of policing that contains several interrelated components. All are essential to the community policing concept and help distinguish it from traditional policing.

***Results vs. process.*** The first component of the community policing philosophy is an orientation toward *problem solving*. Embracing the pioneering work of Herman Goldstein,[3] community policing focuses on *results* as well as process. Incorporated into routine operations are the techniques of problem identification, problem analysis, and problem resolution.

***Values.*** Community policing also relies heavily on the articulation of policing values that incorporate citizen involvement in matters that directly affect the safety and quality of neighborhood life. The culture of the police department therefore becomes one that not only recognizes the merits of community involvement but also seeks to organize and manage departmental affairs in ways that are consistent with such beliefs.

***Accountability.*** Because different neighborhoods have different concerns, desires, and priorities, it is necessary to have an adequate understanding of what is important to a particular neighborhood. To acquire such an understanding, officers must interact with residents on a routine basis and keep them informed of police efforts to fight and prevent neighborhood crime. As the communication continues, a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship develops between the police and the community. Inherent in this relationship is the requirement that officers keep residents abreast of their activities. This ensures accountability to the community, as well as to the department.

***Decentralization.*** The decentralization of authority and structure is another component of community policing. Roles are changed as the authority to participate in the decisionmaking process expands significantly. The expansion of such authority in turn makes it necessary to alter organizational functions throughout the department.

***Power sharing.*** Responsibility for making decisions is shared by the police and the community after a legitimate *partnership*—one that not only enables but also encourages *active* citizen involvement in policing efforts—between the two groups has been established. *Passive* citizen involvement will not suffice. Active participation is essential because citizens possess a vast amount of information that the police can use to solve and prevent neighborhood crime. Power sharing means that the community is allowed to participate in the decisionmaking process unless the law specifically grants that authority to the police alone.

> ***"Individual neighborhoods are not placed in multiple beats."***

***Beat redesign.*** Beat boundaries are drawn to coincide with natural neighborhood boundaries rather than in an arbitrary fashion that meets the needs of the police department. Individual neighborhoods are not placed in multiple beats. If questions arise about the neighborhood to which a citizen belongs, that person is asked to help the police determine the neighborhood with which he identifies.

***Permanent assignments.*** Under community policing, shift and beat assignments are issued on a permanent, rather than a rotating, basis. This allows the beat officer to become an integral part of the community that he has been assigned to protect. When a beat officer is reassigned to another area, his replacement is required to participate in an orientation period with the outgoing officer. During this time the outgoing officer briefs his replacement on the contacts he has made and the knowledge he has gained over the past several months or years, thus providing a continuity of service to the community's citizens.

***"...beat officers... must be given the authority to make decisions..."***

***Empowerment of beat officers.*** Rather than simply patrolling the streets, beat officers are encouraged to initiate creative responses to neighborhood problems. To do so, beat officers must become actively involved in the affairs of the community. In addition, they must be given the authority to make decisions as they see fit, based on the circumstances of the situation. This empowerment reflects the trust that police leaders have in their officers' ability to make appropriate decisions and to perform their duties in a professional, productive, and efficient manner.

***Investigations.*** The premise that neighborhood crime is best solved with information provided by residents is an aspect of community policing that makes it necessary to decentralize the investigative function and focus on neighborhood, or area-specific, investigations. Centralized investigations, however, cannot be eliminated entirely as these are needed to conduct pattern- or suspect-specific *citywide* investigations. Both levels, despite their different focus, are responsible for developing a knowledge base about crime in their area and for developing and carrying out strategies designed to resolve crime problems. Investigations under community policing, however, are viewed from a problem-solving perspective.[4]

***Supervision and management.*** Under community policing, the role of persons at all levels within the organization changes. For example, the patrol officer becomes the "manager" of his beat, while the first-line supervisor assumes responsibility for facilitating the problem-solving process by training, coaching, coordinating, and evaluating the officers under him. Management's role is to support the process by mobilizing the resources needed to address citizen concerns and problems. In carrying out this role, management needs to be not only flexible but also willing to allow officers to take necessary and reasonable risks in their efforts to resolve neighborhood problems and concerns.

***Training.*** Also changed under community policing are all aspects of officer training. At the recruit level, cadets are provided information about the complexities and dynamics of the community and how the police fit into the larger picture. Cadet training also enables the future officer to develop community-organizing skills, leadership abilities, and a problem-solving perspective based on the understanding that such efforts will be more effective if departmental and community resources are used in concert.

Supervisory training, on the other hand, is designed to provide the skills needed to facilitate the problem-solving process. This is accomplished by training officers to solve problems, coordinating officers' activities, planning community-organizing activities, and mapping out criminal investigations.

Because they must be the leaders of the changed roles that characterize community policing, management personnel's training includes the further development of leadership skills, including the ability to excite people about the concept of community policing.

***"... management personnel's training includes... the ability to excite people about the concept of community policing."***

***Performance evaluation.*** With the changed roles for all personnel comes the need for a revised system for evaluating officer performance. Rather than simply counting numbers (e.g., number of citations issued, number of arrests made, number of calls handled), performance quality is based on the officer's ability to solve problems and involve the community in the department's crime-fighting efforts. The criterion then becomes the *absence* of incidents such as criminal offenses, traffic accidents, and repeat calls-for-service.

***Managing calls-for-service.*** Inherent in the community policing philosophy is the understanding that all police resources will be managed, organized, and directed in a manner that facilitates problem solving. For example, rather than directing a patrol car to each request for police service, alternative response methods are used whenever possible and appropriate. Such alternative techniques include the taking of incident reports over the telephone, by mail, or in person at police facilities; holding lower-priority calls; and having officers make appointments with an individual or a group. The result is more time available for officers to engage in problem-solving and community-organizing activities that

lead to improvements in the quality of neighborhood life. Equally important, officers will be able to remain in their beats and handle those calls that require an on-scene response.

> ***"Officers now are expected to develop innovative ways of solving neighborhood problems."***

The Houston Police Department is committed to community policing and is in the process of implementing it with the name of "neighborhood-oriented policing." It is a policing *style* that is responsive to the needs of the community and involves the redesigning of roles and functions for all departmental personnel.

One significant role change is that of the beat officer. No longer is his job structured solely around random patrols and rapid response to routine calls-for-service. Officers now are expected to develop innovative ways of solving neighborhood problems. Inherent in this expanded role is the need for increased communication and interaction with the people who live or work in the officer's beat.

For more than a full year now, the department has been engaged in its version of community policing, resulting in a wealth of experience and insights that can be used to construct a definition of community policing. By definition then, community policing is *an interactive process between the police and the community to mutually identify and resolve community problems.*

Inherent in this definition is a rather dramatic change in the traditional orientation of the police toward the public. The formal separation of the police from the public no longer suffices. What is called for under community policing is the formation of a union between officers and citizens mutually committed to improving the quality of neighborhood life. The formation of such a partnership requires the police to develop appropriate management systems, use available resources more effectively, and work with the community to resolve problems and prevent and control crime.

When considered in light of the necessary reorientation of management attitudes toward the public, community policing also can be thought of as a *management philosophy*. As such, community policing provides a conceptual framework for directing an array of departmental functions and requires management personnel to do the following:

- Ensure cooperative interaction among various departmental functions.
- Ensure collaborative interaction between officers and citizens so that a consensus can be reached on what needs to be done to improve the quality of neighborhood life.
- Integrate the desires and expectations of citizens with the actions taken by the police to identify and address conditions that have a negative effect on the quality of neighborhood life.
- Ensure that all actions are designed to produce planned results.
- Begin addressing a number of organizational issues (such as determining the exact nature of management's responsibilities, deciding which activities best enable management to carry out its responsibilities, and establishing an accountability system for monitoring progress and documenting results).

The Houston experience has shown that community policing is a better, smarter, and more cost-effective means of using police resources and that a new culture in which officers, supervisors, and managers strive to become a part *of* and not apart *from* the community is needed as well. These findings serve to illustrate the dual nature of community policing. That is, it embodies both an operational philosophy and a management philosophy, and each benefits not only the police but also the community. The benefits to the community are as follows:[5]

- ***A commitment to crime prevention.*** Unlike traditional policing, which focuses on the development of efficient means of *reacting* to incidents, community policing strives to reaffirm Sir Robert Peel's premise that the basic mission of the police is to *prevent* crime and disorder.
- ***Public scrutiny of police operations.*** Because citizens will be involved with the police, they will be exposed to the "what," "why," and "how" of police work. Such involvement is almost certain to prompt critical examinations and discussions about the responsiveness and efficiency of police operations in addressing the community's problems.
- ***Accountability to the public.*** Until the advent of community policing, officers were accountable for their actions only to police management. Now officers also will be accountable to the public with whom they have formed a cooperative partnership. Because citizens will be involved in activities such as strategic planning, tactic implementation, and policy development, police

personnel will need to become more aware of and more concerned about the consequences of their actions.

- ***Customized police service.*** Because police services will be localized, officers will be required to increase their responsiveness to neighborhood problems and citizens' concerns. As police-citizen partnerships are formed and nurtured, the two groups will be better equipped to work together to identify and address problems that affect the quality of neighborhood life. For their part, police officers will develop a sense of obligation or commitment to resolving neighborhood problems. The philosophy underlying traditional policing does not provide for such a commitment.

- ***Community organization.*** The degree to which the community is involved in police efforts to address neighborhood problems has a significant bearing on the effectiveness of those efforts. In other words, the success of any crime-prevention strategy or tactic depends on the police and citizens working in concert—not on one or the other carrying the entire load alone. Citizens therefore must learn what they can do to help themselves and their neighbors. The police, in turn, should take an active role in helping citizens achieve that objective.

The benefits of community policing to the police are as follows:[6]

- ***Greater citizen support.*** As citizens spend more time working with the police, they learn more about the police function. Experience has shown that as citizens' knowledge of the police function increases, their respect for the police increases as well. This increased respect, in turn, leads to greater support for the police. Such support is important not only because it helps officers address issues of community safety but also because it cultivates the belief that the police honestly care about the people they serve and are willing to work with all citizens in an attempt to address their concerns.

- ***Shared responsibility.*** Historically the police have accepted the responsibility for resolving the problem of crime in the community. Under community policing, however, citizens develop a sense of *shared* responsibility. They come to understand that the police alone cannot eradicate crime from the community—that they themselves must play an active role in the crime-fighting effort.

- ***Greater job satisfaction.*** Because officers are able to resolve issues and problems within a reasonable amount of time, they see the results of their efforts fairly quickly. The net result for the officer is enhanced job satisfaction.

- ***Better internal relationships.*** Communication problems among units and shifts have been a long-standing problem in police agencies. Because community policing focuses on problem solving and accountability, it also enhances communication and cooperation among the various segments of the department that are mutually responsible for addressing neighborhood problems. This shared responsibility facilitates interaction and cooperative relationships among the different groups.

- ***Support for organizational change.*** The implementation of community policing necessitates a change in traditional policing roles and in turn a change in functional responsibilities. Both modifications require a restructuring of the department's organizational structure to ensure the efficient integration of various functions, such as patrol and investigations. The changes that are needed include new management systems, new training curriculums and delivery mechanisms, a new performance-evaluation system, a new disciplinary process, a new reward system, and new ways of managing calls-for-service.

## Questions asked and answered

In their book *Community Policing: Issues and Practices Around the World*, David Bayley and Jerome Skolnick urge police leaders to be cautious about the success of community policing. It is advice well taken. The process of going from a traditional style of policing to a community-oriented style is not an easy task. It therefore is essential to identify, acknowledge, and address any obstacles or legitimate concerns that might impede the transition. Some of the questions most often raised about community policing are discussed below.[7]

- *Is community policing social work?*

Community policing calls for an expansion of the role of the police in that it focuses on problems from the citizen's point of view. Experience has shown that the concerns of citizens often are different from what the police would say they are. For example, before listening to citizens' concerns became routine, officers assumed that the public worried most about major crimes such as rape, robbery, and burglary. After talking with the people who live and work in their beat, officers found that the community's main concerns were quality-of-life issues such as abandoned cars and houses, loud noises, and rowdy youngsters.

It is for this reason—the need to address citizen concerns—that the role of the police has been expanded. This is no

> ***"Rather than being soft on crime, community policing is a more effective method . . ."***

meant to imply, however, that the police are expected to solve the problems by themselves. On the contrary, it means that the police should be able to do at least one of two things: mobilize the community to solve the problem (e.g., organize a neighborhood clean-up program) or enlist the services of the appropriate agency to address the problem (e.g., the city Public Works Department to clean away debris).

Concerns that such activities are akin to social work are ill-founded. The police officer's expanded role does not even come close to meeting the definition of social work. As a profession, social work is an ongoing and often long-term relationship between the social worker and the client. This is in contrast to the *usually* short-term, problem-focused relationship that develops under community policing.

- *Will community policing result in less safe neighborhoods?*

By any standard, the police working alone have been unable to control crime effectively. Experience has shown that increased citizen involvement results in more efficient crime-control efforts. The success of Neighborhood Watch groups is but one example of the effectiveness of making crime fighting a joint effort. Other programs, such as Crime Stoppers, have led to the solution of many serious offenses. Because community policing includes the public as a full partner in the provision of crime-prevention and crime-fighting services, it stands to reason that public safety will *increase* rather than decrease.

- *Will officers be reluctant to enforce the law under community policing?*

Among the tenets of community policing is the need to develop a close relationship between beat officers and the people who live and work in that area. In most neighborhoods only a small percentage of the population commits illegal acts. The goal of community policing is to become a part of the law-abiding majority and thereby develop a partnership to effectively deal with the law-violating minority.

Experience has shown that if police work closely with the "good" citizens, the "bad" ones are either displaced or driven out of the area. It therefore is incorrect to suggest that as the police develop close relationships with the citizens in their beat, law violators will not be arrested.

- *Is community policing soft on crime?*

The police always will have as one of their primary roles the enforcement of laws. Under community policing, police officers not only will have an expanded skills-base at their disposal, but they also will have access to a previously untapped resource—input from members of the community. The two resources together provide officers with a most effective means of enforcing the laws and should eliminate any concerns that community policing will weaken officers' ability to perform this task. Rather than being soft on crime, community policing is a more effective method for fighting crime.

> ***"Will community policing result in unequal services to minority communities?"***

Because community policing calls for the tailoring of police services to meet the unique needs of each neighborhood, minority communities can expect to receive better, rather than unequal, services. This is not to imply that one community will receive preferential treatment at the expense of another. Rather, it means that each community will receive services that are *appropriate* to its particular problems, concerns, and priorities.

- *Will community policing result in police corruption?*

Experience has not shown nor even suggested that community policing leads to corruption. For corruption to arise, there must be a culture ripe for its development, and such certainly is not the case with community policing and its emphasis on police officer professionalism, expanded discretionary decisionmaking authority, trust in officers' sound judgment and good intentions, and officers' accountability to law-abiding citizens. This does not mean, however, that the police can ignore their responsibility to detect and respond to corruptive influences and incidents should they occur.

- *Will access to community policing be distributed fairly?*

This question would be appropriate only if community policing were no more than a program; however, it is an overall operating *style* and philosophy of policing. Nowhere among the tenets of community policing is there anything that would, in and of itself, result in the unequal distribution of services between the poor and the affluent. By its very nature, community policing calls for the appropriate delivery of services to all neighborhoods.

- *Will community policing require more resources?*

Because community policing is an operating style and not a new program, no additional officers are needed. More pertinent is the issue of how the agency's resources will be used. Experience has shown that community policing is a more cost-effective means of using available resources than is traditional policing for two reasons: community participation in the crime-control function expands the amount of available resources, and the solving of problems (rather than responding again and again to the same ones) makes for a more efficient deployment of combined police and community resources.

- *Is community policing antitechnology?*

The use of high-technology equipment and applications is essential to the efficient practice of community policing. Without high technology, officers would find it difficult to provide the level and quality of services the community deserves. Computer-aided dispatching, computers in patrol cars, automated fingerprint systems, and on-line offense-reporting systems are but a few examples of the pervasiveness of technology in agencies that practice community policing.

- *Will older officers resist community policing?*

Experience with both community-oriented *programs* and community policing as an operating *style* has shown that older officers are *more likely* to accept community policing than are younger officers. The maturation that comes with age plays a significant role in older officers' greater willingness to adopt the new policing style. Research has shown that younger officers tend to become police officers because they are looking for adventure. As officers grow older, they become less interested in action and more interested in providing services.

## Conclusion

As an operating style, community policing evolves and exists in two phases. Phase I involves the implementation of community-oriented programs designed to improve the ability of the police to address problems such as crime, drugs, fear, and urban decay. These programs, however, are not intended to involve all members of the department or all members of the community. Phase I also is marked by a continuity in the organization's operating style and the systems that support it.

> ***"Because community policing becomes the dominant service-delivery style, the corresponding support systems must change as well."***

Phase II involves significant changes in the police mission and the organization's operational and management philosophies. Because community policing becomes the dominant service-delivery style, the corresponding support systems must change as well.

The transition, however, is not instantaneous; rather, it is evolutionary. An institution that traditionally has delivered services on the basis of time-honored conventional wisdom cannot be expected to easily or quickly adopt a new method of operating.

The phase of community policing in which an agency finds itself should not be used as a criterion for evaluating the agency. Experience has shown, however, that implementing Phase II is easier if the agency has had experience with individual community-oriented programs.

Because community policing is relatively new as a style of policing, questions have been raised about its effectiveness. Any doubts, however, should be put to rest. Experience has shown that community policing as a dominant policing style is a better, more efficient, and more cost-effective means of using police resources. In the final analysis, community policing is emerging as the most appropriate means of using police resources to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods throughout the country.

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## Notes

1. Jerome H. Skolnick and David H. Bayley, *The New Blue Line: Police Innovations in Six American Cities*, New York, The Free Press, 1986: 4–5.

2. See for example, Lee P. Brown et al., *Developing Neighborhood Oriented Policing in the Houston Police Department*, Arlington, Virginia, International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1988; and Timothy N. Oettmeier and William H. Bieck, *Developing a Policing Style for Neighborhood Oriented Policing:* Executive Session #1, The Houston Police Department, February 1987.

3. Herman Goldstein, "Improving Policing: A Problem-Oriented Approach," *Journal of Crime and Delinquency* 25 (April 1979): 236–258.

4. Timothy N. Oettmeier and William H. Bieck, *Integrating Investigative Operations Through Neighborhood Oriented Policing:* Executive Session #2, The Houston Police Department, January 1989.

5. Jerome H. Skolnick and David H. Bayley, *Community Policing: Issues and Practices Around the World*, Washington, D.C., National Institute of Justice, May 1988: 67–70.

6. Ibid.: 70–73.

7. Ibid.: 81–87.

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